

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8799
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 09481

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GE, UR, GW,US, UK, FR
SUBJECT: GDR THREATS AGAINST PLANNED CDU MEETING
IN BERLIN

REFS: (A) USBER 1493; (B) USBER 1366; (C) BONN 8611

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A PRELIMINARY EXCHANGE OF VIEWS THE
BONN GROUP SHARED THE VIEW THAT GDR INTERFERENCE WITH
TRANSIT TRAFFIC TO BERLIN ON JUNE 16 IS LIKELY. GIVEN
DELAYS IN FORMULATING REACTIONS TO THE LAST SUCH
INTERFERENCE IN AUGUST 1976, THE BONN GROUP IS RECOM-
MENDING THAT THE FRG AND THE ALLIES BE PREPARED TO
DELIVER PROMPT PROTESTS IF SUCH INTERFERENCE MATERIAL-
IZES ON JUNE 16. BONN GROUP REPS ALSO AGREED TO SEEK
THE VIEWS OF CAPITALS ON WHETHER WE WOULD BE PREPARED
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ON THIS OCCASION TO GO BEYOND PROTESTS AND TAKE COUNTER
ACTIONS, WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE IN THE FIELD OF
BILATERAL RELATIONS. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S
AGREEMENT ON THE NEED, AT A MINIMUM, FOR PROMPT
PROTEST AND GUIDANCE ON WHETHER THE US WOULD BE PRE-
PARED TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION. END SUMMARY

1. WE SHARE USBER'S BELIEF (REF A) THAT ALL SIGNS POINT TO GDR PREPARATIONS FOR TURNING BACK POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE CDU RALLY TO BE HELD IN WEST BERLIN ON JUNE 16. US REP ACCORDINGLY ASKED THE BONN GROUP TO MEET AFTERNOON OF JUNE 3 FOR A PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM AND HOW WE SHOULD APPROACH IT.

2. US REP POSED THREE QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

(A) HOW THE BONN GROUP ASSESSES THE PROBABILITY OF GDR INTERFERENCE WITH TRANSIT ON JUNE 16;

(B) WHETHER IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR THE FRG TO MAKE A PREEMPTIVE DEMARCHE TO THE GDR AND FOR THE ALLIES TO APPROACH THE SOVIETS; AND

(C) HOW THE FRG AND THE ALLIES WOULD REACT IF THERE WERE IN FACT INTERFERENCE WITH TRANSIT.

3. AS FOR THE FIRST QUESTION, ALL BONN GROUP REPS SHARED THE OPINION THAT THERE WAS A HIGH PROBABILITY THAT THE GDR IS PLANNING SOME ACTION AGAINST POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE RALLY. THE FRG REP (HENZE) RECAPITULATED THE DISCUSSIONS TO DATE WITH GDR OFFICIALS ON THE SUBJECT, GIVING A SLIGHTLY MORE COHERENT ACCOUNT THAN AT THE MAY 16 BONN GROUP MEETING (REF C). ACCORDING TO HENZE'S ACCOUNT, AS SUPPLEMENTED BY INFORMATION FROM MEICHSNER OF THE BERLIN REPRESENTATION, CONFIDENTIAL

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THESE HAVE BEEN THE CONTACTS TO DATE:

-- APRIL 25: MITDANK OF THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY, IN A CONVERSATION WITH KUNZE OF THE SENAT, MADE A VAGUE REFERENCE TO PLANS FOR ANOTHER "STERNFAHRT" WHICH HE SAID WOULD BE A GROSS VIOLATION OF THE FRG/GDR TRANSIT TRAFFIC AGREEMENT (TTA).

-- MAY 11: GDR REPRESENTATIVE FRIEDERICHs RAISED THE SUBJECT IN THE FRG-GDR TRANSIT COMMISSION AND LEFT WITH THE FRG REP A PAPER REFERRING TO PRESS REPORTS OF PLANS FOR A STERNFAHRT ON JUNE 17. THE PAPER STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GDR RECALLED THE AUGUST 1976 STERNFAHRT WHICH GROSSLY VIOLATED THE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL TRANSIT THROUGH THE GDR AND WARNED OF CONSEQUENCES IF THE JUNGE UNION AGAIN SHOULD CARRY OUT MISUSE OF THE TRANSIT ROUTES IN A DEMONSTRATIVE ACTION DIRECTED AGAINST THE GDR.

-- MAY 12: GDR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE KOHL

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CALLED ON MINISTER OF STATE WISCHNEWSKI AT THE
CHANCELLERY. WISCHNEWSKI STATED THAT THE PLANNED
RALLY WOULD NOT BE A MISUSE OF THE TRANSIT WAYS AND
IF THE GDR WERE TO TAKE MEASURES AGAINST THE PARTI-
CIPANTS IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE TTA.
WISCHNEWSKI ADDED THAT THE GDR WAS NO DOUBT AWARE
FROM THE PRESS THAT NO "STERNFAHRT" WAS PLANNED.
(COMMENT: CONTRARY TO THE IMPRESSION LEFT IN HIS
PREVIOUS BRIEFING, HENZE MADE IT CLEAR THAT WISCHNEWSKI
MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT THE CHANCELLERY
HAD TALKED TO CDU OFFICIALS, BUT REFERRED ONLY TO PRESS
REPORTS THAT THE RALLY WOULD NOT TAKE THE FORM OF A
STERNFAHRT. END COMMENT)

-- MAY 27: MITDANK GAVE KUNZE THE WARNING
REPORTED IN REF A.

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-- MAY 27: ON THE SAME DAY, BAUMGAERTEL OF THE GDR MISSION IN BONN SAW STERN OF THE FEDERAL CHANCELLERY LEAVING WITH HIM A "NON-PAPER" STATING THAT THE PLANNED "REVANCHIST ACTION" IN WEST BERLIN WAS DESIGNED TO CREATE TENSIONS AND COMPLICATIONS AND TO BURDEN RELATIONS, THEREBY GROSSLY VIOLATING THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. THE BAUMGAERTEL PAPER ALSO INVOKED THE FRG-GDR BASIC AGREEMENT AND STATED THAT IF THE INSTIGATORS OF THE RALLY STAND BY THEIR PLAN, WHICH IS CLEARLY DIRECTED ESPECIALLY AGAINST THE GDR, THE GDR WILL BE OBLIGATED TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES FOR PROTECTION OF ITS INTERESTS AND FOR PREVENTING A MISUSE OF THE TRANSIT ROUTES. NEITHER OF THE MAY 27 APPROACHES REFERRED TO A STERNFAHRT; BOTH WERE AIMED SOLELY AT THE PRESENT PLANS FOR A RALLY.

4. WHILE AGREEING THAT GDR ACTION SEEMED LIKELY, BONN GROUP REPS RECOGNIZED THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE IN ADVANCE ON WHAT GROUNDS THE GDR MIGHT JUSTIFY SUCH ACTION. THEY RECALLED THAT, IN THE CASE OF THE AUGUST 1976 STERNFAHRT, IT SEEMED CLEAR IN RETROSPECT THAT THE GDR HAD DETERMINED TO STOP THE BUSES AND THAT IT WAS PURELY FORTUITOUS THAT LITERATURE WAS FOUND ON TWO OF THE BUSES WHICH PERMITTED THEM TO CLAIM THAT THE OCCUPANTS HAD INTENDED TO MISUSE THE TRANSIT ROUTES. SO FAR THE GDR THIS YEAR HAS WARNED BASICALLY AGAINST DEMONSTRATIONS DIRECTED AT THE GDR AND ONLY INCIDENTALLY HAS ALLUDED TO MISUSE OF THE TRANSIT ROUTES--A CHARGE THAT THE GDR WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY SUBSTANTIATING UNLESS OCCASIONAL TRAVELERS ARE FOUND TO HAVE PROVOCATIVE POSTERS OR LITERATURE.

5. IN DISCUSSION OF THE SECOND AND THIRD QUESTIONS POSED ABOVE, IT WAS GENERALLY AGREED THAT THE ANSWER TO THE SECOND (WHETHER PREEMPTIVE APPROACHES SHOULD

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BE MADE TO THE GDR OR TO THE SOVIETS) WOULD DEPEND IN LARGE MEASURE ON THE ANSWER TO THE THIRD (WHAT ACTION THE ALLIES AND THE FRG PLAN TO TAKE IN THE EVENT OF SERIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH TRANSIT). THE US REP RECALLED THAT THE ALLIED PROTEST TO THE SOVIETS IN AUGUST 1976 HAD BRANDED THE OBSTRUCTION OF TRAFFIC ON THAT OCCASION AS A CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE QUADRI-PARTITE AGREEMENT AND HAD CALLED UPON THE SOVIETS TO

HONOR THEIR OBLIGATION IN THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT TO SEE THAT TRAFFIC TO WEST BERLIN WAS UNIMPEDED. HE NOTED THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO REMIND THE SOVIETS THAT WE WERE SERIOUS IN THAT PROTEST, BUT THAT ON THE OTHER HAND OUR POSITION WOULD BE WEAKENED IF WE GAVE THE SOVIETS SUCH A REMINDER WITHOUT INTENDING TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH SOME ACTION IF THERE WERE ANOTHER VIOLATION OF THE SAME SORT.

6. HENZE STATED THAT THE DANGER LAY IN ACQUIESCING IN PRESSURES ON THE TRANSIT ROUTES WHICH HAD AS THEIR PURPOSE PREVENTING ACTIVITIES IN WEST BERLIN. ONE MIGHT ARGUE THAT BERLIN WOULD NOT LOSE ANYTHING BY NOT HAVING SUCH ACTIVITIES (AND HE PERSONALLY WOULD NOT CONTRADICT SUCH AN ARGUMENT), BUT IT WAS NECESSARY TO RECOGNIZE THAT IF THE GDR SUCCEEDED IT MIGHT SUBSEQUENTLY USE PRESSURES ON THE TRANSIT ROUTES FOR OTHER PURPOSES AS WELL. IN EFFECT, THE GDR WAS INTERFERING WITH THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF WEST BERLIN, TRYING TO GET SOME KIND OF GOVERNING AUTHORITY OVER IT.

7. US REP STATED THAT HE FULLY SHARED HENZE'S CONCERNS

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BUT AGAIN SUGGESTED THAT THE BASIC ISSUE WHICH WE SHOULD BEGIN TO CONSIDER AND TO PUT TO CAPITALS WAS WHETHER SUCH A VIOLATION OF THE QA AND TTA WOULD BE LOOKED UPON SERIOUSLY ENOUGH TO NECESSITATE COUNTER ACTIONS, WHICH PRESUMABLY COULD BE TAKEN ONLY IN THE FIELD OF BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE GDR AND THE USSR. THE FRENCH REP (GAUSSOT) OBSERVED THAT ALLIED ACTION WOULD DEPEND IN THE FIRST INSTANCE ON WHAT THE FRG PLANNED TO DO; IF THE FRG DOES INTEND TO GIVE A SERIOUS WARNING TO THE GDR, THEN THE ALLIES MIGHT CONSIDER A COMPARABLE WARNING TO THE SOVIETS.

8. THERE WAS A CONSENSUS THAT, AT A MINIMUM, BOTH THE FRG AND THE ALLIES WOULD HAVE TO PROTEST PROMPTLY TO THE GDR AND THE SOVIETS, RESPECTIVELY. BECAUSE EVEN THAT QUESTION WAS DEBATED FOR SOME DAYS LAST AUGUST, IT WAS AGREED TO FORWARD A BONN GROUP RECOM-
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MENDATION THAT WE BE PREPARED TO MOVE QUICKLY WITH PROTESTS ON THIS OCCASION. BECAUSE OF BRITISH HOLIDAYS THE BONN GROUP WILL BE UNABLE TO MEET AGAIN BEFORE JUNE 8, BUT IT WILL AT THAT TIME CONSIDER DRAFT CONTINGENCY LANGUAGE.

9. AS FOR MEASURES OTHER THAN PROTESTS, THE BONN GROUP REPS RECOGNIZED THAT, BECAUSE ANY CONCEIVABLE COUNTER ACTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE IN THE FIELD OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND THEREFORE OUTSIDE THE COMPETENCE OF THE BONN GROUP, AT THIS STAGE THE QUESTION COULD SIMPLY BE POSED AS ONE FOR URGENT CONSIDERATION IN CAPITALS. THEY FURTHER RECOGNIZED THAT ANY ALLIED ACTION WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE DEPENDENT UPON A DETERMINATION BY THE FRG TO REACT, FOR EXAMPLE, BY POSTPONING THE PENDING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GDR.

10. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THERE IS PROBABLY NO FIRMFRG VIEW ON THESE ISSUES AS YET, WEICHERT OF THE INNER-GERMAN AFFAIRS MINISTRY TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR TODAY THAT HE WAS RECOMMENDING THAT THE FRG AGAIN WARN THE GDR AGAINST TAKING ANY ACTION TO INTERFERE WITH JUNE 16 RALLY. HE THOUGHT HIS RECOMMENDATION, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE POINT THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD NOT AUGUR WELL FOR THE PENDING NEGOTIATIONS, WOULD BE ACCEPTED. WEICHERT ADDED THAT, WHILE NOT MAKING A FORMAL REQUEST, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD NOT BE A BAD IDEA IF THE ALLIES WERE ALSO TO SPEAK TO THE SOVIETS ABOUT THE MATTER.

HENZE, AT THE BONN GROUP MEETING, WAS NOT INFORMED ON THE STATUS OF FRG CONSIDERATIONS OF THE MATTER BUT UNDERTOOK TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE QUESTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE BONN GROUP AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

11. ACTION REQUESTED:

(A) THE DEPARTMENT'S AGREEMENT TO THE BONN GROUP
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RECOMMENDATION THAT, IN THE EVENT OF INTERFERENCE WITH TRANSIT ON JUNE 16, THE ALLIED SHOULD MAKE A PROMPT PROTEST TO THE SOVIETS.

(B) THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON WHETHER SUCH A VIOLATION OF THE QA WOULD BE VIEWED SERIOUSLY ENOUGH TO WARRANT REACTIONS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE USSR OR THE GDR AND, IF SO, WHETHER A PREEMPTIVE APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE TO THE SOVIETS.
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